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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

~~INTELLIGENCE REPORT~~

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COUNTRY El Salvador/Nicaragua

DATE: 25X1A6a

SUBJECT Presidential Candidates and Their Maneuvers

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SUPPLEMENT

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1. The proportion of presidential aspirants to voters in El Salvador is growing larger as the election approaches, and the machinations planned by some of them are getting involved.
2. The leading candidate for the presidency is the President Salvador Castaneda Castro. Although by law he is forbidden to succeed himself, Castaneda has a plan for circumventing the Constitution and at the same time foiling a feared plot by his chief rival, Colonel Osmin Aguirre. The scheme calls for a fake coup and the resignation of Castaneda in favor of a triumvirate headed by Major Alberto Funes. This group would then name General Mauro Cipinola Castro, a close friend of Castaneda's, president to fill out the latter's term, following which Castaneda would be elected again quite constitutionally. All this scheme requires is a pretext for the coup. This has been provided, according to source, by a letter, deemed a forgery by nearly everyone except the Salvadoran government, from the Mexican Communist Party to the Peruvian Communist Party predicting a Communist uprising in El Salvador on 12 October. Although the country seemed comparatively tranquil and there was no other evidence pointing to actual disturbance in the making, the Government ordered a search of two thousand dwellings in the Santa Anita area and the roundup of all Communists between 8 and 13 October. According to source, the rumors were circulated by the Government itself in order to create a crisis and motivate President Castaneda's plan. Only fifteen suspected Communists were detained, and they were later released by order of the President. It was reported that Colonel Aguirre and Ricardo Arbizu Bosque, another alleged plotter, were slated for arrest on 11 October, but apparently the Government originated this report simply to frighten them from attempting action.
3. A new entrant in the field is reported to be the Salvadoran Minister to Nicaragua, General Salvador Pena Trejo. [REDACTED] Pena Trejo has reached an understanding with Somoza and has gained the latter's financial backing to an extent that could make him a contender to be reckoned with. Pena Trejo's plan is to place one of his men on President Castaneda's General Staff and to line up inactive Army officers and those whose allegiance is not committed elsewhere. [REDACTED] that many would be happy to take the General's money and then forget about the matter, and that only a fortuitous arrangement of circumstances could bring Pena Trejo to a position of real power in the Army.
4. It now transpires that another candidate, Dr. Oliverio C. Valle, who was reported in SO 7824 to be planning to throw his votes to Colonel Osmin at the

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opportune moment in the campaign, is really working for President Castaneda.

was assured by Dr. Valle that the real purpose of his candidacy was to organize a leftist bloc which could be thrown to the support of President Castaneda in the elections.

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